

Washingtonian Magazine at 7: Profitable, Ready to Expand

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The Washingtonian magazine, which has just celebrated its seventh birthday, is now a profitable business venture on the verge of expansion into related fields.

Owners also are exploring a public sale of stock in Washingtonian Magazine, Inc., but a decision to "go public" is at least a year away, according to founder, president and editor Laughlin Phillips.

In an interview, Phillips said he is reviewing a number of possible new ventures—all related to the Washington area.

For example, the Washingtonian might produce newsletters and information publications directed at specific and general audiences here, as well as newsletters about Washington for subscribers elsewhere.

Phillips expressed a keen interest in publishing books in association with the magazine—citing Psychology Today's success in this area—and said there are a number of areawide services that could be developed, but he declined to be more specific.

An earlier venture into community newspaper publishing failed, Phillips said, because it came too soon after the Washingtonian itself was started.

Early in 1967, the magazine company purchased two weeklies—the former Georgetown Spectator and Capitol Hill Spectator—but the newspaper operations could not be watched closely because prime attention still had to be devoted to the magazine, Phillips said. The newspapers were sold and eventually folded.

Today, however, the magazine is experiencing record growth in advertising, circulation and revenues. One result, Phillips continued, is that 1972 "likely will be our first complete year in the black."

October's anniversary issue broke a number of records: 180 pages overall, the most editorial pages (82), the most advertising pages (93), and the greatest number of advertisers (243), and number of freelance contributors (26).

Year	CIRCULATION		
	Subscriptions	Newstand	a-Total
1968	18,300	4,500	24,000
1969	21,800	5,500	28,300
1970	24,422	7,735	33,157
1971	27,077	8,768	36,845
1972 (Sept.)	31,193	11,000	43,193
b-1973 (Jan.)	32,000	11,500	44,500

a-Total includes 1,000 complimentary copies mailed to the White House, government agencies, congressmen, senators, diplomats.
b-Estimate.

ADVERTISING & REVENUES

Year	Ad Pages	Ad Revenues	Total Revenues
1968	635	\$320,000	N.A.
1969	528	\$257,000	N.A.
1970	647	\$359,500	\$500,000
1971	784	\$445,250	\$635,000
1972 (10 issues)	841	\$468,500	—
a-1972 (12 issues)	1,026	\$575,500	\$820,000

a-Estimate.

The forthcoming November issue—featuring a cover story on Washington singles and an article on the capital city's most effective and most important lobbyists—will set more new records, according to publisher and vice president Richard S. Contee, who was originally the magazine's advertising manager when the publication was founded in 1965.

Perhaps more impressive than the single-issue records are the accompanying statistics provided by Phillips and Contee, pointing to longer-term growth trends in an era when large magazines generally didn't do well.

It did take a bit longer than expected to put the Washingtonian into the black; when founded, Phillips and his original partner Robert J. Myers—now publisher of the New Republic—had assumed there would be losses for three (circulation of Vol. 1, No. 1, was about 15,000).

Among subscribers today, Contee said, about 40 per cent live in the District, 32 per cent in the Maryland suburbs and 28 per cent in Northern Virginia. Median income of families that

subscribe is \$25,657. Circulation figures of the Washingtonian are certified by the Audit Bureau of Circulation and readership data is compiled by Applied Management Sciences of Silver Spring.

What readers get in return for the \$1 newsstand price, or \$8 subscription rate (up from 50 cents and -5, respectively, in 1965) is "editorial vitality," according to Phillips.

Advertisers get a specialized audience—relatively more affluent and higher educated than the average of the whole area, a single page in one issue, costs \$720 for a black and white ad (70 per cent of the advertising is local, but national ads are growing at a more rapid rate).

A major thrust in selecting editorial copy is helping readers throughout the metropolitan area identify themselves as "Washingtonians," Phillips continued. Service articles on "how to do this or where to go for that," are featured. Examples in recent issues were guides to area indoor tennis courts, antique shops and private schools.

The Washingtonian also has received wide attention for some investigative reporting, notably a 1970 article rating the performances of nearly 100 city

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